General Assembly

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Sixty-third session
Agenda item 62 (*a*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/63/428)*]

63/243. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[1] most recently resolution 61/148 of 19 December 2006,

Bearing in mind the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[2] in particular section II.B of the Declaration, relating to equality, dignity and tolerance,

Reiterating the need to intensify the struggle to eliminate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance throughout the world,

Reiterating also the importance of the Convention, which is one of the most widely accepted human rights instruments adopted under the auspices of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that universal adherence to and full implementation of the Convention are of paramount importance for promoting equality and non-discrimination in the world, as stated in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance on 8 September 2001,[3]

Mindful of the importance of the contributions of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to the effective implementation of the Convention and to the efforts of the United Nations to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Emphasizing the obligation of all States parties to the Convention to take legislative, judicial and other measures to secure full implementation of the provisions of the Convention,

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

[2] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[3] See A/CONF.189/12 and Corr.1, chap. I.

Recalling its resolution 47/111 of 16 December 1992, in which it welcomed the decision, taken on 15 January 1992 by the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to amend paragraph 6 of article 8 of the Convention and to add a new paragraph, as paragraph 7 of article 8, with a view to providing for the financing of the Committee from the regular budget of the United Nations,[4] and reiterating its deep concern that the amendment to the Convention has not yet entered into force,

Stressing the importance of enabling the Committee to function smoothly and to have all necessary facilities for the effective performance of its functions under the Convention,

I

Reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on its seventieth and seventy-first[5] and its seventy-second and seventy-third[6] sessions;

2. *Commends* the Committee for its contributions to the effective implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[1] especially through the examination of reports under article 9 of the Convention, action on communications under article 14 of the Convention and thematic discussions, which contribute to the prevention and elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

3. *Calls upon* States parties to fulfil their obligation, under article 9, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to submit their periodic reports on measures taken to implement the Convention in due time;

4. *Expresses its concern* at the fact that a great number of reports are overdue and continue to be overdue, in particular initial reports, which constitutes an obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention;

5. *Encourages* States parties to the Convention whose reports are seriously overdue to avail themselves of the advisory services and technical assistance that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights can provide, upon their request, for the preparation of the reports;

6. *Encourages* the Committee to continue to cooperate and exchange information with United Nations bodies and mechanisms, in particular with the Human Rights Council, its Advisory Committee and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and with intergovernmental organizations, as well as with non-governmental organizations;

7. *Encourages* States parties to the Convention to continue to include a gender perspective in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and invites the Committee to take into account a gender perspective in the implementation of its mandate;

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[4] See CERD/SP/45, annex.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 18* (A/62/18).

[6] Ibid., *Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 18* (A/63/18).

8. *Notes with appreciation* the engagement of the Committee in the follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;[3]

9. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made so far by the Committee to improve the efficiency of its working methods, including with a view to further harmonizing the working methods of the treaty bodies, and encourages the Committee to continue its activities in this regard;

10. *Welcomes*, in this regard, measures taken by the Committee to follow up on its concluding observations and recommendations, such as the appointment of a follow-up coordinator[7] and the adoption of the guidelines on follow-up;[8]

11. *Encourages* the continued participation of members of the Committee in the annual inter-committee meetings and meetings of chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies, especially with a view to a more coordinated approach to the activities of the treaty body system and standardized reporting as well as to solving the problem of the backlog of reports of States parties in an effective manner, including by identifying efficiencies and maximizing the use of their resources as well as learning and sharing best practices and experiences in this regard;

12. *Notes* the persistent backlog of reports of States parties awaiting consideration, which prevents the Committee from considering the periodic reports of States parties in a timely manner and without undue delay, as well as the request of the Committee that the General Assembly authorize an extension of its meeting time, which is currently only six weeks per year;

13. *Decides* to authorize the Committee to meet for an additional week per session, as a temporary measure, with effect from August 2009, until 2011;

14. *Also decides* to assess the situation regarding the meeting time of the Committee at its sixty-fifth session on the basis of an evaluation made by the Office of the High Commissioner, taking into account a more comprehensive approach to the backlog of human rights treaty bodies and the increasing number of reports of States parties to the human rights conventions;

II

Financial situation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

15. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the financial situation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;[9]

16. *Expresses its profound concern* at the fact that a number of States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination[1] have still not fulfilled their financial obligations, as shown in the report of the Secretary-General, and strongly appeals to all States parties that are in arrears to fulfil their outstanding financial obligations under article 8, paragraph 6, of the Convention;

17. *Strongly urges* States parties to the Convention to accelerate their domestic ratification procedures with regard to the amendment to the Convention concerning the financing of the Committee and to notify the Secretary-General

[7] Ibid., *Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 18* (A/60/18), annex IV.

[8] Ibid., *Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 18* (A/61/18), annex VI.

[9] A/63/306.

expeditiously in writing of their agreement to the amendment, as decided upon at the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on 15 January 1992,[4] endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/111 and further reiterated at the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties on 16 January 1996;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to ensure adequate financial arrangements and to provide the necessary support, including an adequate level of Secretariat assistance, in order to ensure the functioning of the Committee and to enable it to cope with its increasing amount of work;

19. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to invite those States parties to the Convention that are in arrears to pay the amounts in arrears, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session;

III

Status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

20. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;[10]

21. *Expresses its satisfaction* at the number of States that have ratified or acceded to the Convention, which now stands at one hundred and seventy-three;

22. *Urges* States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention and to take into consideration the concluding observations and general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

23. *Reaffirms its conviction* that ratification of or accession to the Convention on a universal basis and the implementation of its provisions are necessary for the effectiveness of the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and for the implementation of the commitments undertaken under the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,[3] and expresses its disappointment that universal ratification of the Convention was not achieved by the targeted date of 2005;

24. *Urges* all States that have not yet become parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to it as a matter of urgency;

25. *Urges* States to limit the extent of any reservation they lodge to the Convention and to formulate any reservation as precisely and as narrowly as possible in order to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, to review their reservations on a regular basis with a view to withdrawing them, and to withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention;

26. *Notes* that the number of States parties to the Convention that have made the declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention now stands at fifty-three, and requests States parties that have not yet done so to consider making that declaration;

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[10] A/63/473.

27. *Invites* the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to present an oral report on the work of the Committee and to engage in an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session under the item entitled "Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance";

28. *Decides* to consider, at its sixty-fifth session, under the item entitled "Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance", the reports of the Committee on its seventy-fourth and seventy-fifth and its seventy-sixth and seventy-seventh sessions, the report of the Secretary-General on the financial situation of the Committee and the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention.

74th plenary meeting
24 December 2008